

## 2.3 LAND USE

This section describes existing and future land uses in the Central Arizona Regional Framework Study area. Comprehensive mapping of existing and future land uses in the study area is not readily available and land use plans are subject to frequent change. Current land use plans for individual jurisdictions should be reviewed and considered in evaluating specific transportation improvements.

### 2.3.1 Existing Land Use

The following subsections describe land uses and major activity centers in the study area. Activity centers are described in relation to the principal transportation corridors.

#### Pinal County

A significant portion of Pinal County is Arizona State Trust Land. With much of the land currently in reserve for State Trust, or under protective regulations, much of Pinal County is generally very rural. There are, however, developed incorporated areas, including the communities of Apache Junction, Superior, Kearny, Mammoth, Coolidge, Florence, Eloy; unincorporated areas of Oracle and Claypool/Copper Hills; and Master Planned Communities of Saddlebrooke and Merrill Ranch and Johnson Ranch--in the study area that support a wider range of land uses, from low intensity industrial to low-density residential. Even though many of these areas are at least partially developed, many are still fairly rural in character, with predominantly low densities and commercial land uses. There is also a large amount of privately owned land in the western portion of the county, between the Tohono O'odham Nation and the Gila River Indian Community. A portion of this area lies within the city of Casa Grande.

The seven incorporated jurisdictions and other activity centers in the study area have largely developed around major transportation corridors. These major transportation corridors include SR 77, SR 79, US 60, SR 87, SR 287, and I-10.

#### SR 79 Corridor:

##### *Florence*

The SR 79 corridor passes through Florence, giving the town a commercial core and commercial land uses along the highway. Most of the areas outside the town core or those abutting the highway are low- to medium-density residential. SR79B passes through the Florence. Commercial development exists around the corridor. The Town Core consists of mostly low-density residential, with exception around SR 79B, and professional offices. McFarland State Park is located within the Town Core. The Town Core also has a Historic District with over 150 buildings on the Historic Register, including land marks such as the 1891 Pinal County Courthouse and Silver King Hotel. The Arizona Department of Corrections is the principal employer in the Florence area. Florence is also the county seat.

##### *Florence National Guard Target Range*

The Florence Military Reservation (FMR) is managed by the Arizona Army National Guard in cooperation with other state and federal agencies. The Reservation encompasses artillery and small-arms training ranges. It is the main training site for the Arizona Army National Guard. A multiple use policy allows for other activities in addition to military training, including cattle grazing, hunting, camping, birding, and other outdoor recreation.